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First national call for Rs 2,000 Cr BIRAC-RDI fund to boost biotechnology sector

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Dr Jitendra Singh announces Biotechnology focused RDI Fund to bridge lab-to-industry gap in India



Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh has announced the first national call for BIRAC-RDI Fund to promote high-impact Biotechnology innovations under the Government of India's Rs 1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) initiative.

Referring to the emerging areas, the Minister said that India has already forayed into areas like space biotechnology and is preparing for future areas such as space medicine. Biotechnology experiments are being carried out in space using domestically developed kits, including plant science and life sciences research. He said, such efforts position India to contribute knowledge and applications of global relevance, thereby enhancing both scientific prestige and geopolitical standing.

Dr Rajesh S. Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology; Director General, BRIC and Chairman BIRAC said that the structure of the RDI Fund is designed to support long-term, high-risk research, which requires patient capital and advanced infrastructure. He said that this initiative complements the Bio E3 policy and provides a framework for manufacturing next-generation products in biopharma, bio-industrial production, bioenergy, blue economy and bio-computation. He said that the aim is to reach out from the research results to the industrial results on a large scale.

Dr Jitendra Kumar, Managing Director, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) said that BIRAC has been appointed as a second-level fund manager under the RDI framework and it will invest an amount of Rs 2,000 crore over the next five years, with the possibility of further expansion. He said that BIRAC has built an innovation ecosystem across the country in the last decade, which includes more than 100 Bio-Incubation Centres, more than 10 lakh square feet of incubation space, and collaborations with more than 15 lakh startup entrepreneurs.

The BIRAC – RDI Fund is part of the National RDI Initiative that was approved by the Union Cabinet in July 2025 and launched in November 2025 under the Research National Research Foundation (ANRF), which is steered by the Department of Science and Technology. The fund aims to bridge the gap between laboratory research and industrial-scale manufacturing, and it supports technology from TRL-4 to TRL-9 through a mix of equity, convertible documentation, and long-term debt.

The national call for applications is now open. Eligible startups, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and industry partners can submit proposals through the official portal https://biracrdif.org. The last date for Phase 1 is March 31, 2026.